MISCELLANEOUS.

Note on Mr. Minchin's Paper on Ascetta.

By R. v. Lendenfeld.

In the 'Quarterly Journal of Microscopical Science' (vol. xxxii. p. 260) Mr. Minchin argues against the statement—made, as he says, by me—that the central cavity of *Euplectella aspergillum* is a pseudoscular tube forming part of the inhalant system.

In reply to this I must observe that I never said anything of the kind, and that in perusing the passages of my 'Monograph of Horny Sponges,' from which Minchin quotes, I fail to see how he could so far misunderstand my statements. What I do say is "*that I think it may not be impossible that in some of the cup-shaped or tubular Hexactinellida*" the central cavity may be pseudoscular (inhalant). I never said that the central cavity *is* inhalant in *any* Hexactinellid, not to speak of *Euplectella*, where such an assumption would be quite preposterous.

As a foreigner I am unable to express myself in English as clearly as I might desire; but nevertheless I feel that in this case some hostile motive must have prompted Minchin to so surprising an interpretation of my statements.

I can only say, (1) that I never doubted the exhalant nature of the central cavity in *Euplectella*; (2) that I fail to see how any one can gather from my statements such a meaning as Minchin imputes to them; (3) that I uphold all my statements and conclusions on this subject as correct and logical; and (4) that I regret to see a misinterpretation of this kind used by a student of natural history as a weapon in a scientific controversy.

University, Innsbruck,
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Gymnorhynchus reptans, *Rud., and its Migration.*

By M. R. Moniez.

Among the parasites of marine fishes one of the most curious is certainly *Gymnorhynchus reptans*, which is harboured by several hosts, and is in particular very common in the rough sun-fish (*Orthagoriscus mola*), in which it inhabits by preference the liver and muscles. This species is distinguished from the other species of Tetrarhynchidæ which are known in the larval state by the curious appendage which is found at the extremity of the vesicle into which the animal retracts the anterior portion of its body, after the manner of a Cysticercus. This appendage, which, in our species, may attain the length of a metre, forms an inextricable network in the tissues

of the host, and it is extremely difficult to extricate it entire; a cyst protects the parasite throughout the whole of its length.

Gymnorhynchus reptans was hitherto unknown in the perfect state: I have had the good fortune to meet with it in this state in *Oxyrhina glauca*. Baron de Guerne found at Concarneau in the intestine of this shark some worms of large size, which he was good enough to hand over to me to study; they unquestionably belong to this species.

The individuals observed reach the length of 30 centim., while the breadth of the neck scarcely exceeds that of the initial portion of the chain; but this organ is much thicker, since it attains a depth of 2 millim., while the first segments only measure about half a millimetre: the ripe segments are almost square, measuring 4·5 to 5 millim. in breadth by 5 to 6 millim. in length; they are swollen in the middle and marked at this point with a broad brown spot, which corresponds to the mass of ova: the other segments diminish successively in size until we come to the head.

Contrary to what was supposed by van Beneden, the vesicle into which the anterior portion of the larva retracts itself, as well as its enormous appendage, do not pass over to the final animal and do not become sexual; they are digested by the new host, and of this exceedingly long animal there remains absolutely nothing but the neck and that diminutive portion of the tissues which prolongs it, and which we formerly called the *generative zone*, at the expense of which the chain of segments is formed.

We may ask ourselves what is the morphological significance of the appendage which prolongs the vesicle of *Gymnorhynchus* in the larval state—an appendage which is not found or which is very rudimentary in the forms allied to this species: there is no doubt that this is a structure perfectly comparable to that which we have pointed out in several Cestodes of the type of *Tænia serrata*, which exists in many other Cestode larvæ, if not in all, and which we notice in particular in all those Cysticerci recently found in fresh-water Crustacea. This portion of the body, which corresponds to the hexacanth embryo, develops but little, or frequently falls off at an early period, remaining simply indicated at the extremity of the Cysticercus by an umbilicus of which we have explained the mode of formation. It is necessary to note that, in the particular case of *Gymnorhynchus*, the appendage is not degenerating, and that it retains a large degree of vascularity and does not show any laceration in the centre: it is a mistake, moreover, to have represented it as jointed, since it only presents simple folds in its entire length.

I would add, in conclusion, that the dimensions of *Gymnorhynchus* in the perfect state prevent the conclusion, advanced by Orley in a positive manner, that the Cestodes of the cartilaginous fishes are always of small size.—*Comptes Rendus*, tome cxiii. no. 24 (December 14, 1891), pp. 870, 871.